# Content Chameleon: How and Why NPR's Content Goes Everywhere

Zach Brand @zbrand Sr. Director Technology & Strategy NPR, Digital Media



#nprapi

"From NPR News in Washington.." - Jack Speer et al



# "From NPR News in Washington.." - Jack Speer et al















X 784





# NPR Digital Media





### A Day In The Life Of A Tibetan Monk

IN CLUBE CASE

Ever wondered what goes on inside those tucked-away Himalayan monasteries? As you might imagine, not too much

But Kaushal Parikh was drawn to that simplicity. Last year, the Mumbai-based photographer was attending a workshop in India when he stumbled across a small monastery and "immediately hit it off with the head monk." The result of his five days in that monastery is a simple "day in the life" photo story — and some valuable life lessons.















# **But First, Some Definitions...**

- API: Application Programming Interface
- COPE (Create Once Publish Everywhere)
- Flexible Content
- CrossMedia
- TransMedia



# Why Have A Crossmedia Strategy?



0 - 50



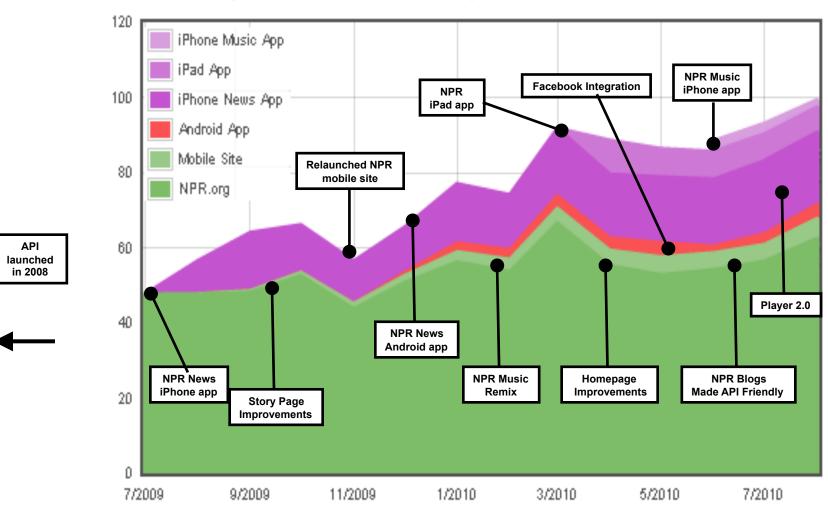
> 1,000,000,000



> 800,000



# What Can Flexible Content Achieve?



Shown in Millions, Source: Omniture, Last updated: September 23, 2010.



# Who Else is Doing it?







# Who Else is Doing it?





# "Everything should be an API"

FCC managing director Steve Van Roekel















# Who Else is Doing it?









Sunlight Foundation Reporting Group, is a searchable database tracking organizations that are paying for ads and other forms of political communication.

Foreign Lobbyting Influence Tracker digitizes information that representatives of foreign governments, polifical parties and governmentcontrolled entities must disclose to the U.S. Justice Department when they seek to influence U.S. policy. House Expenditure Database On November 30, 2009, the US House of Representatives released the quarterly Statement of Disbursements online for the first time. Since the Office of the Chief Administrative

searchable database of each House member's



# Our Technical Principles...

- Don't Attempt to Build the 'One System'
- COPE (Create Once Publish Everywhere)
  - COPE drives all other architectural decisions
  - Realized at NPR with the NPR News API
- Content Management Tools & Presentation Layers
- Understand Your Atom
  - Story is the Atom for NPR
  - Stories contain 'Assets' (ie. text, audio, video, images, etc.)
  - Stories belong to 'Lists'
- It is better to be incomplete than inaccurate



# Good Tools Good People

. . .

Flexible Content



1997 (No CMS)





## SPONSORED BY New York Times Online

### December 10, 1997



### Looking for the Latest News?

 Listen to NPR news on the hour: in <u>RealAudio</u>: <u>14.4</u> or <u>28.8</u>, Or try <u>NetShow</u> 28.8 or higher.

### **Highlights Today**

- . Listen to the premiere of <u>Looking For</u> <u>Mary</u>, a documentary on one woman's spiritual search.
- . Check out Radio Expedition's new <u>Frontiers in the Sea</u> site, with an interactive expedition and unique tours of all the marine sanctuaries.

### The End of Life

Take a few minutes to check out this incredible <u>online companion</u> to NPR's year long look at Death and Dying in America. You can revisit some of the <u>stories</u> you heard on the air, look at <u>dozens of readings</u> and experience some of the most poignant <u>postings</u> in our *Tell Your Story* section.

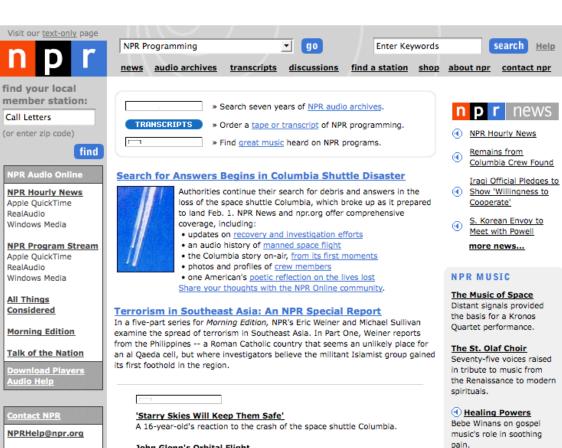
This site is best viewed with Netscape 3.0 or Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0. A text only version is also available. We change the content on this site many times a day. We suggest you hit your refresh/reload button often.

webmaster@npr.org

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2003 (CMS)



### John Glenn's Orbital Flight

Walter Cronkite's 40th anniversary retrospective on John Glenn's historic first trip into space.

### An Interview with Astronauts Anderson and McCool

NPR's Tavis Smiley spoke with shuttle Columbia's pilot, Willie McCool, and payload commander Mike Anderson, as they orbited the Earth in late January.

Sponsor NPR

**NPR Awards** 

What is this?

Corrections

NPR Ombudsman

Submit Story Ideas

( ) PBS

### n p r news NPR's Mideast Coverage: Audio, Transcripts

COVERAGE Due to intense interest in Mideast events, NPR makes available -at no charge -- transcripts and audio of reports about the Mideast produced by NPR in its newsmagazines. This includes the

# Driveway Moment

search Help

### 'War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning'

This story was suggested by Sarah, who listens to WOI in Des Moines.

What is a 'Driveway Moment?'



2005 (CMS)



# 2008 (API)



NPR's Tar Launch Expectations:

Supports the entile Improve development efficiencies for NPR.org

Some sophisticated stations will use the API

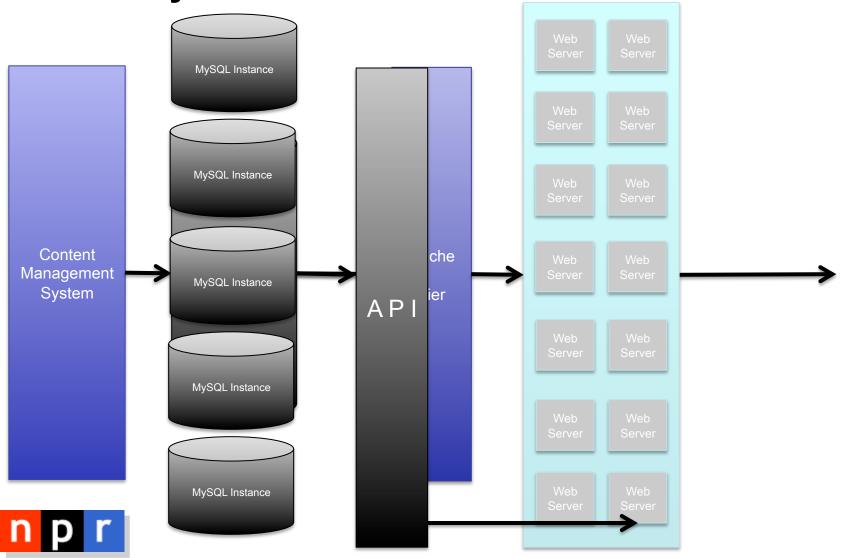
Partner integration will be easier

Enables us to ser The public will do amazing things with the API

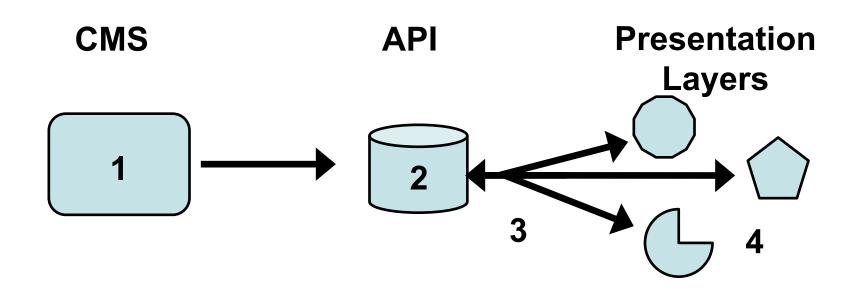
Enables our stations to serve their communities better



NPR's System in 2008 NPR's System in 2007



# The Life of a (FLEXIBLE) Story at NPR





# 1: NPR CMS

Save And Exit Cancel	Unpublish Edit Layout Send for edit Schedule/Publish
Create Story (Story was Published on Apr 1, 2010 5:34 PM) Help	
Main Fields * ▼	
Unique ID: 125322033 Author: Vikki Valentine at 2010-03-29 Last Editor: Krishnadev Calamur at 2010-04-01	Publish and Display Date: what's this?  April ▼ 1 ▼ 2010 ▼ 9 ▼ 53 ▼
2 Title (required) A Space Voyage To Genesis	Page Type: Generic Story
? Subtitle	? Enable/Disable Comments:  Default
? Teaser (required) (Tags: <em>, <strong>)</strong></em>	? Story Status: Independent Story
Telescopes and probes send us images of stars flickering in and out of existence on a somewhat frequent basis. But Hubble has delivered something rare to the human eye: the birth of an actual solar system.	? Display Transcript (for mini-buildout):  ? Organization:  NPR
	? Priority Keywords (separated by commas)
? Mini Teaser (Tags: <em>, <strong>)</strong></em>	Decil Decil
Take a journey through our galaxy to witness the rare birth of a solar system.	Reywords (separated by commas)
	? Correction Title
? Window Title Allowed Types: Generic, News Package, Series, Sub-Series	s, Genre ? Corrections
A Space Voyage To A Solar System's Genesis	r Corrections
? Title, Short Version	▼

# 2: NPR API

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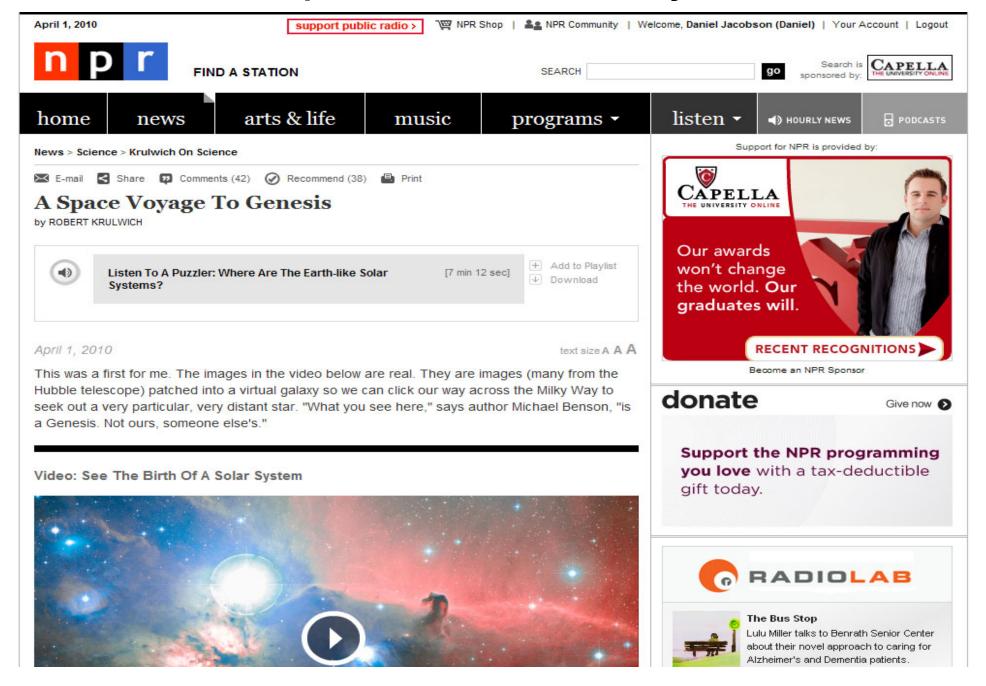
# 3: API → Presentation Layers (or other Apps)

API USER FROM THE INTERNET\*

\*Includes requests fro NPR.org, NPR mobile products, NPR member station sites, partner implementations and the general public



# 4: Examples of Presentation Layers

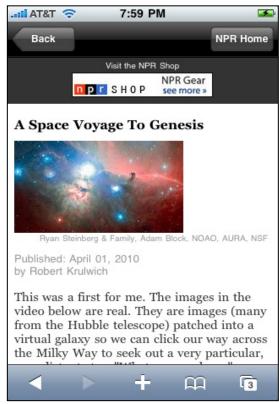


# iPhone App

# **Mobile Site**

# **Android App**

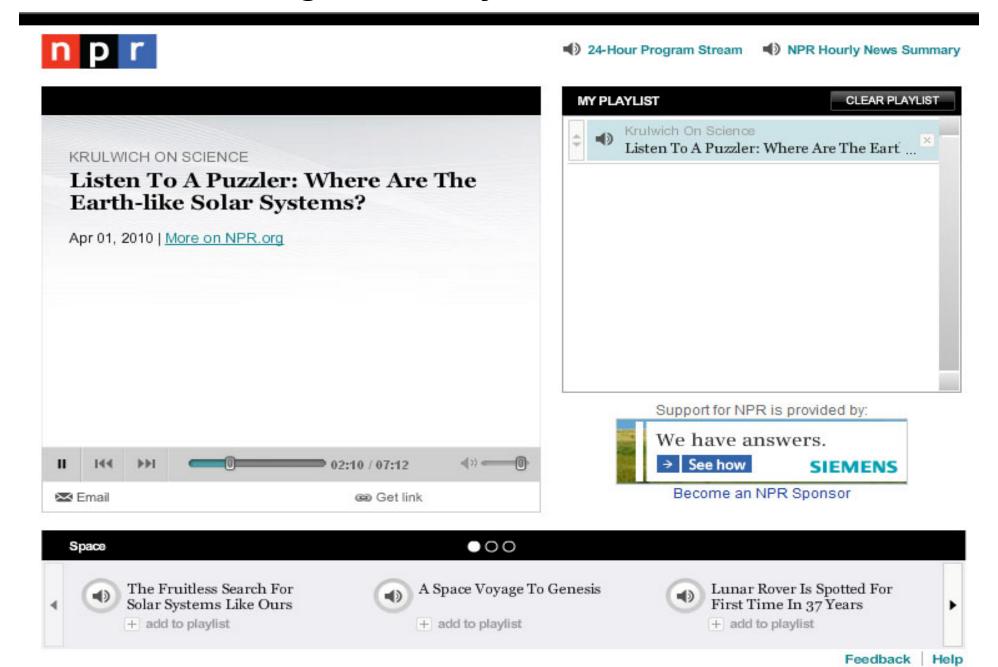




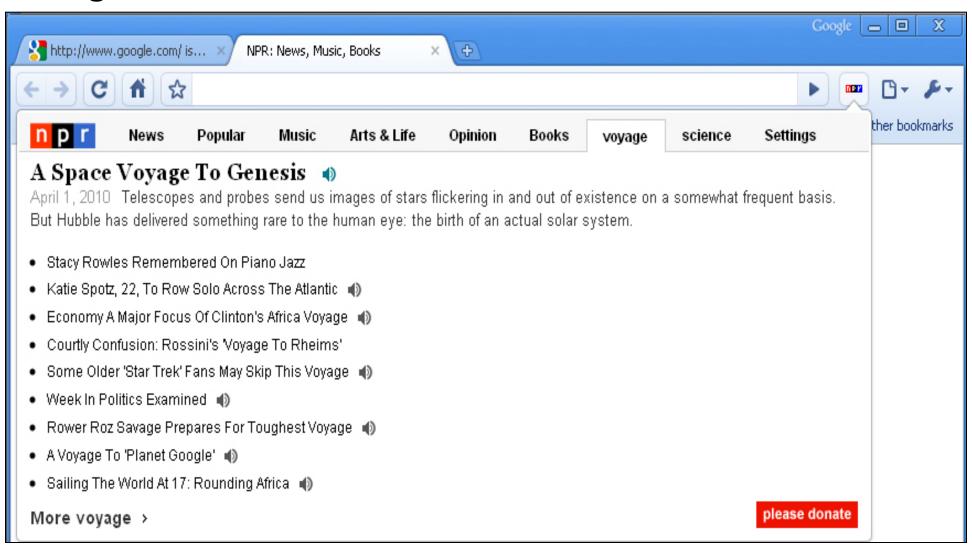




# **NPR.org Audio Player**

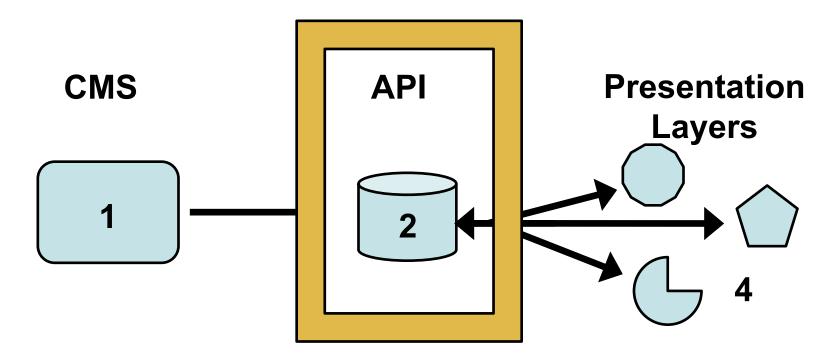


# **Google Chrome Extension**

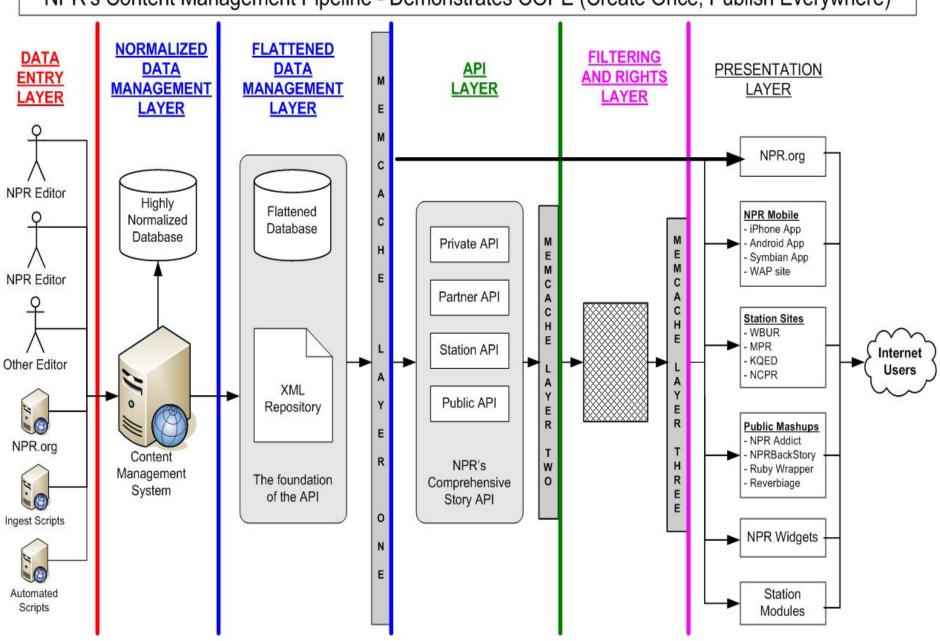


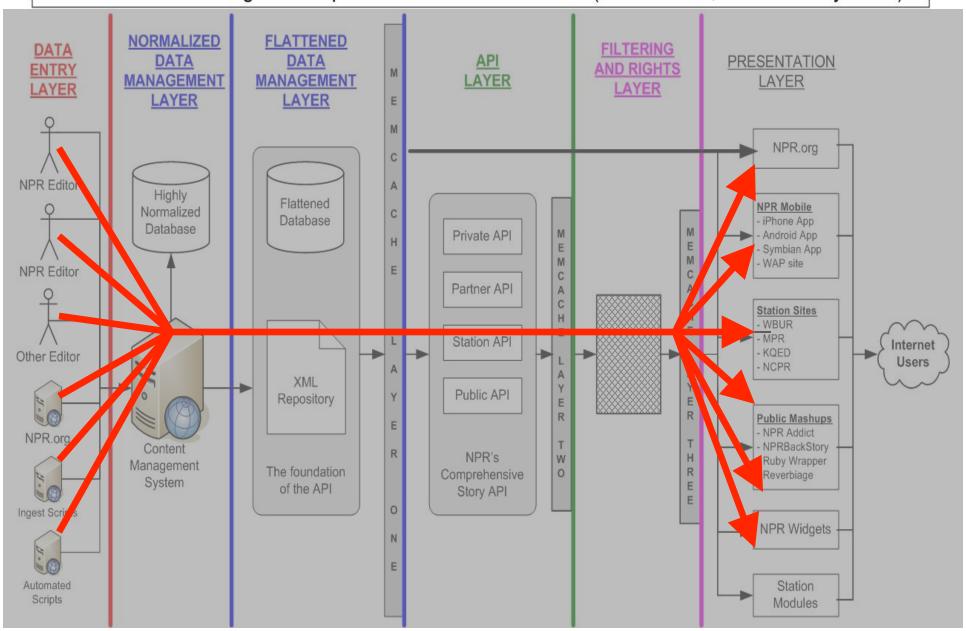


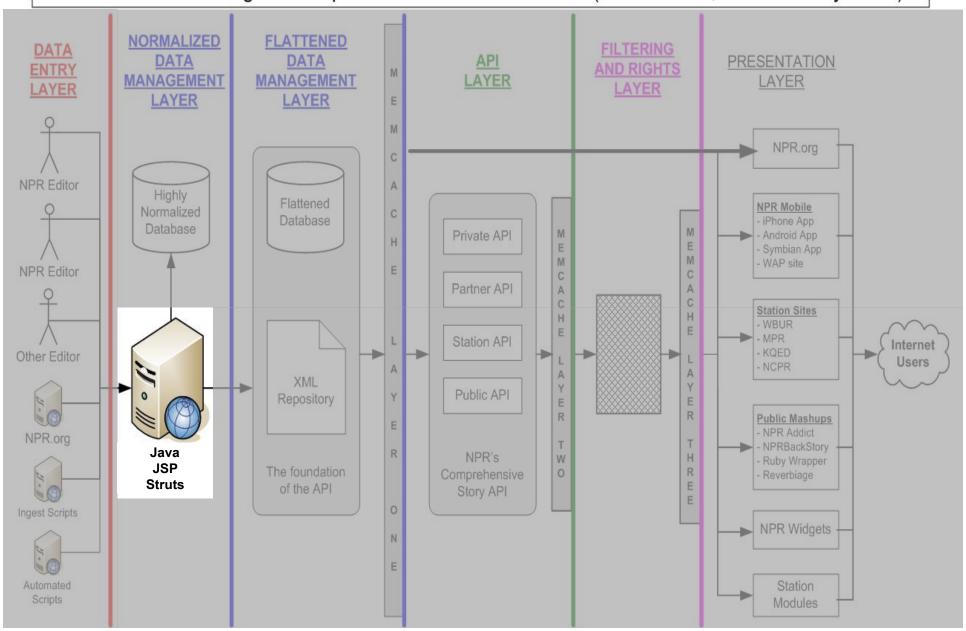
# The Life of a (FLEXIBLE) Story at NPR

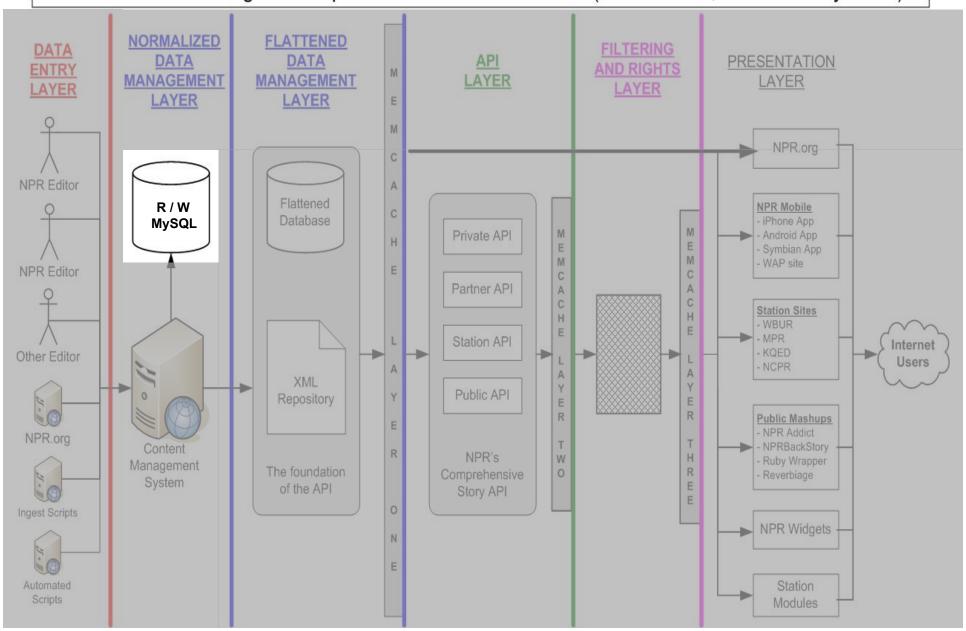


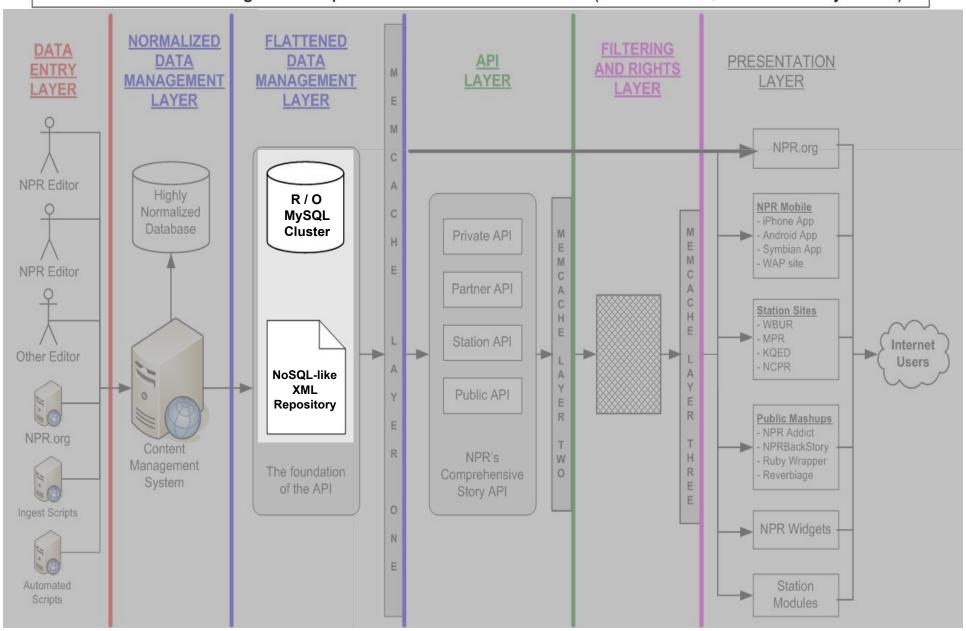


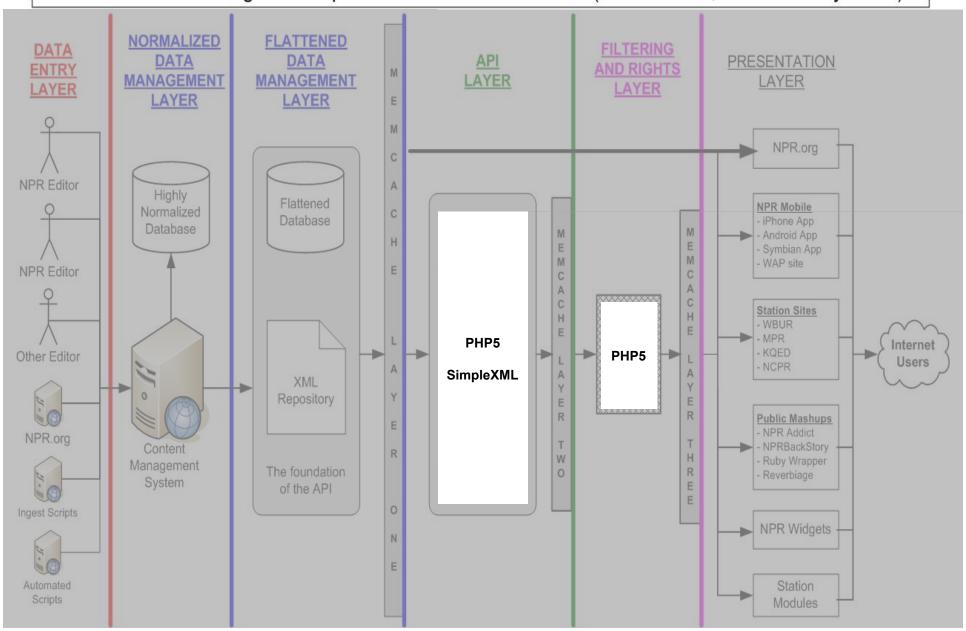








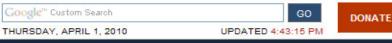






# WBUR.org







### A Space Voyage To Genesis





By ROBERT KRULWICH April 1, 2010 9:53 AM



This was a first for me. The images in the video below are real. They are images (many from the Hubble telescope) patched into a virtual galaxy so we can click our way across the Milky Way to seek out a very particular, very distant star. "What you see here," says author Michael Benson, "is a Genesis. Not ours, someone else's."

Michael Benson is a reporter, filmmaker and author of a number of books that feature gorgeous pictures of objects in space. He hangs out with a ragtag community of amateur astronomers including "ugordon" from Croatia, "ngunn" from Wales, "nomisn" from Melbourne, "volcanopele" from Tucson, and "floyd" from Boston. Together, they collect images. The images aren't theirs. They are mostly images taken by government space telescopes and posted on public Web sites. Benson and the others download the raw digital data, render them into black and white, then edit, colorize, and sometimes animate them. Then they swap what they've done at UnmannedSpaceflight.com and wonder at the amazing things they see.

Benson is really good at this. For example, here's his rendering of the Crab Nebula, which is about 6,500 light-years away. The image came from a space telescope; the color is Bensonl's: a baby blue cloud of gas left over from an exploding star that erupted in A.D. 1054 Earth time.

That rich aquamarine is Benson's approximation of what helium, ionized hydrogen plus a dash of carbon, oxygen and nitrogen might look like to a visiting human with slightly larger-than-life eyes.

Here's an amazing one: two galaxies, called "The Antennae," colliding. This image, says Benson, is "a preview of what will happen when the Milky Way meets Andromeda in about 2.5 billion years."

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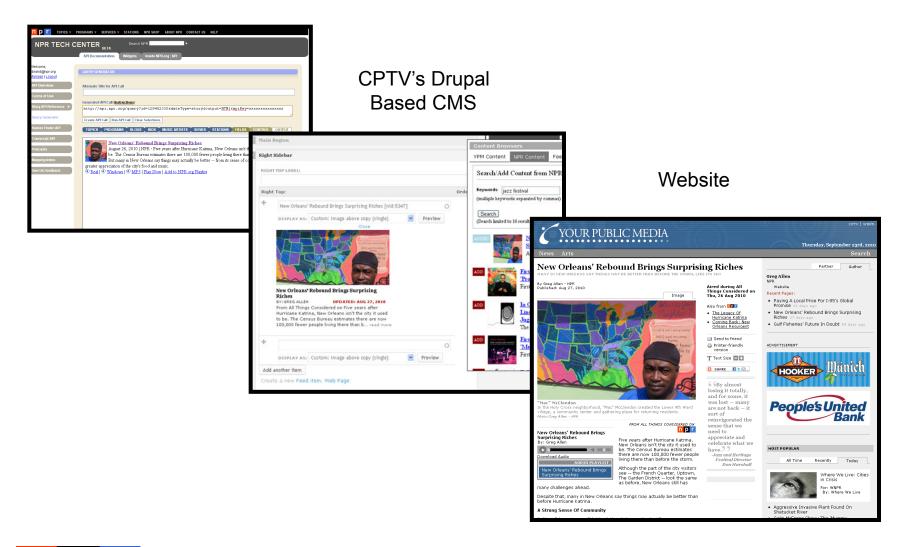
- The Depreciating American Dream, Part 3: Two Renting Couples, No Regrets
- The Depreciating American Dream, Part 2: Doubting The Suburban Fantasy
- The Depreciating American Dream: Homebuyer's Remorse
- 4. Boston Breaks March Rainfall Record
- 9 Charged In Bullying Of Mass Teen Who Killed Self
- 6. Bullying Case Warrants Jail Time, Says South Hadley Parent
- 7. In Wayland, A Duck Boat To The Rescue
- 8. Stomach Virus Is Surging In Boston
- 9. Apple's iPad To Hit Stores This Week
- 10. Roxana Saberi: Caught 'Between Two Worlds'

### UNDERWRITING

18

# **Connecticut Public Broadcasting**

NPR API

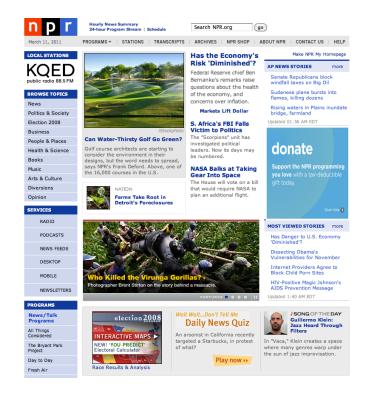




# So What did We Learn...



# **#1 Flexible Content is Design Agnostic**





Home Page Design Pre-API Launch

Home Page Design Post-API Launch



# And Good Design Requires Flexibility Too...

### You Still Have to Make the Presentation Compelling

### Chilean miner » On the Run: Chilean Miner Finishes Race New York Times - Thomas Kaplan - 29 minutes ago Edison Peña could be forgiven for having to slow to a walk at times during the New York City Marathon on Sunday. His training, after all, came via subterranean loops of only a few miles at a time, with the tunnels of a collapsed Chilean miner thanks America for NY marathon support Telegraph.co.uk Chilean miner wins NY hearts by finishing marathon Reuters The Press Association - The Guardian - TMZ.com - People Magazine -Wikipedia: 2010 New York City Marathon all 2,528 news articles » Diplomacy, Diwali, dinner o USA Today - Calum MacLeod - 1 ho AP By Calum MacLeod, USA TODA tribal leade working to get more girls into classro ➡ Video: Obamas dance to Marathi fol Obama, Indian Prime Minister to Hold F s Voice of America Chicago Tribune - The Canadian Press egraph.co.uk all 9,555 news articles » Oregon stays No. 1 in E ird spot ahead of **Boise State** USA Today - 55 minutes There was little change, ne Bowl Series standings Sunday, other than the nal champion Alabama from prime spo -Eccles for Utah-TCU game Ksl.com ➡ Video: Thousands floci BCS Rankings: Oregon, Aub n, TCU, Boise State and LSU in Top Five FanHouse Salt Lake Tribune - Bloomberg - Plain Dealer - CBSSports.com all 2,113 news articles » Box Office: "Megamind" dominates weekend with \$47.7 CNN - John Young - 2 hours ago

The animated comedy "Megamind" drew younger moviegoers with an estimated 52 percent of its audience under 25 years old. "Due Date" came in second Box Office: Everybody Wins! (But Especially Megamind) New York Magazine

Dreamworks Animation's 'Megamind' Is a Megahit New York Times

MTV.com - USA Today - Just Jared - TheHDRoom

all 1.122 news articles »

### **Search For Unity Takes Presidents Beyond The Border**

Despite the vitriolic campaign, two longtime senators say there's hope for compromise.

( ) On All Things Considered

■ Obama: Elections Force 'Midcourse Corrections'

### **Among Benefits For Walmart** Workers: A Degree

The world's largest retailer is offering its 1.4 million employees a college education.

On Weekend Edition Sunday

### Drug Lord's Death Brings Hope, Fear To Mexican City

Some worry the death of the Gulf Car could empower a rival mafia, the

### more news

- = NYC Marathon: Guts From Chile, Glory Ethiopia
- Obama Surprised By Political Cost Of Hea = Old White Man Turns Into Young Asian Guy



Sudde n Costs More.

rn Flakes? s paid to farmers for corn, wheat ave been shooting up. But so far, have held steady for consumers. have to pay the price?

d) On Weekend Edition Sunday



Why

MUSIC INTERVIEWS

'The Anthology Of Rap': Lyrics As Poetry



A Muggle's Dream Quidditch As An NCAA



Why Club DJs Love 'Barbra Streisand'

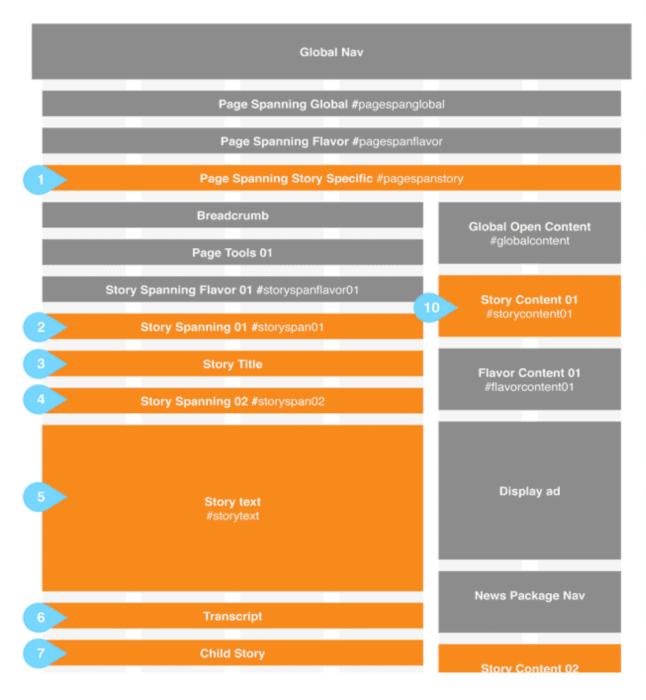


Spitzer's Rise And Dramatic Fall



Welcoming Fall With An





### Notes

Story Specific Locations are used by web producers as they build out a page, based a page's unique storytelling requirements.

1 - Page Spanning Story Specific Can be used for assets that require full page width.

### 2 - Story Spanning 01

Reserved for assets that may need to span entire story well above the headline.

### 3 - Headline

May be suppressed if needed

### 4 - Story Spanning 02

Reserved for assets that may need to span entire story well below the headline. The default order of assets:

- Correction
- Featured audio/video
- Non-featured audio/video
- 4 col photo
- other 4 col assets

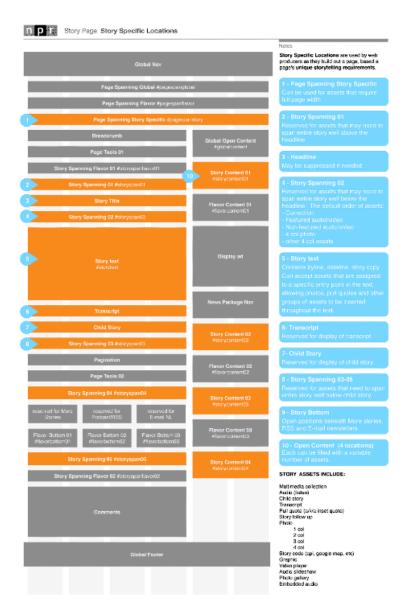
### 5 - Story text

Contains byline, dateline, story copy.

Can accept assets that are assigned to a specific entry point in the text, allowing photos, pull quotes and other groups of assets to be inserted throughout the text.

### 6- Transcript

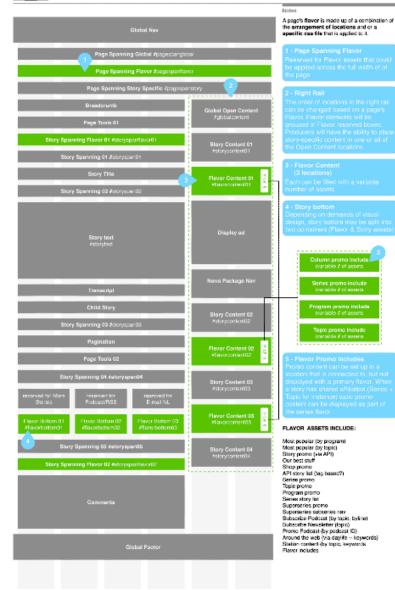
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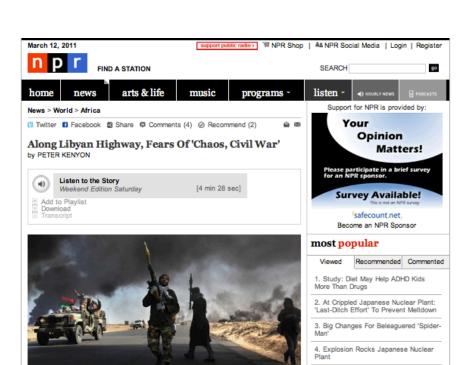
Last modified on Thu Apr 09 2009 Page 4 of 4







Last modified on Thu Apr 09 2009 Page 3 of 4



John Moore/Getty Images

Libyan rebels battle government troops as smoke from a damaged oil facility darkens the front-line sky Friday in Ras Lanuf, Libya.

March 12, 2011

text size A A A

The conflict between Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's forces and anti-government rebels runs from East to West along the coastal highway, with much of the fighting located near the oil port of Ras Lanuf. The area between the city and the Gadhafi stronghold of Sirte is the scene of explosions and gunfire, charging rebels and circling fighter jets.

But wander just a short way off the highway, and you sometimes find a semblance of normal life, laced with anxiety for the future.



Credit: NPR

Al-Ogeil is a village between the oil ports of Brega and Ras Lanuf. Normally a somnolent place, its gas station became a hub of rebel fighter activity this week, especially when the rebels abandoned parts of Ras Lanuf.

But just up the hill, quiet prevails. On one side of a dust-and-sand road, ramshackle stone houses are scattered in various states of disrepair. On the other side sits a neat row of unfinished new houses. Residents say construction began six years ago, but they were never finished.

Why not? "Because Gadhafi is our leader." comes the reply.

### AP AP News Wire: World News From the Associated Press

3 Evacuees Near Nuclear Plant Exposed To Radiation

Arab League Asks For No-Fly Zone Over Libya

Euro Leaders Surprise With Crisis Deal

Last updated: 12:45 am ET view more

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oin us )

# #2 Content & Technology Are Inextricably Linked

Good Tools Good People

Flexible Content



As you may know, there will be an election for your representative to Congress in November this year. Do you think you will definitely vote to re-elect [your incumbent House representative] to Congress, probably vote to re-elect [your incumbent House representative], probably vote for someone else, or definitely vote

most popular

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home arts & life music listen news programs - HOURLY NEWS News > Politics > Elections 2010: The Midterms Twitter (0) Facebook (0) Share D Comments (304) Recommend (43) NPR Poll Shows Tough Road Ahead For Democrats by MARA LIASSON + Add to Playlist Listen to the Story Download [5 min 6 sec] Morning Edition Transcript June 15, 2010 text size A A A

A new public opinion survey for NPR shows just how difficult it will be for Democrats to avoid big losses in the House this November.

Democrat Stan Greenberg and Republican Glen Bolger conducted the first public battleground poll of this election cycle. They chose the 70 House districts experts regard as most likely to oust incumbents this fall. What they found was grim news for Democrats.

View Selected Poll Results And Methodology Dem candidate GOP candidate 19% Overall-Dem. Districts-47% GOP Districts 3%

For this poll, Bolger and Greenberg chose the districts where incumbents are considered the most vulnerable, and, in the case of open seats, the ones most likely to switch party control in November. Sixty are currently held by Democrats — many of whom won these seats even when voters in the same district preferred Republican John McCain for president in 2008. The other 10 districts are the flip side — held by Republicane in the House even though their

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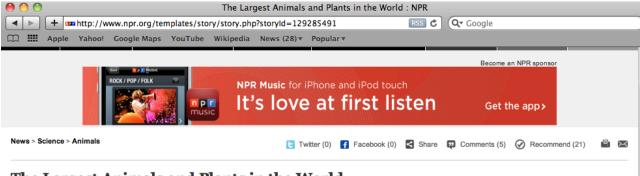
Commented

## most popular

1. Ingrid Betancourt's Six Years In The Jungle 2. Sticklers Make A Point On National Punctuation Day Wind May Have Helped Moses Part The Red Sea

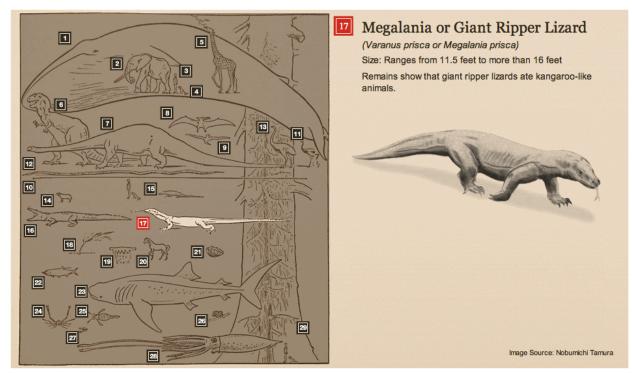
Biologist Tracks Walruses Forced Ashore As Ice

Recommended

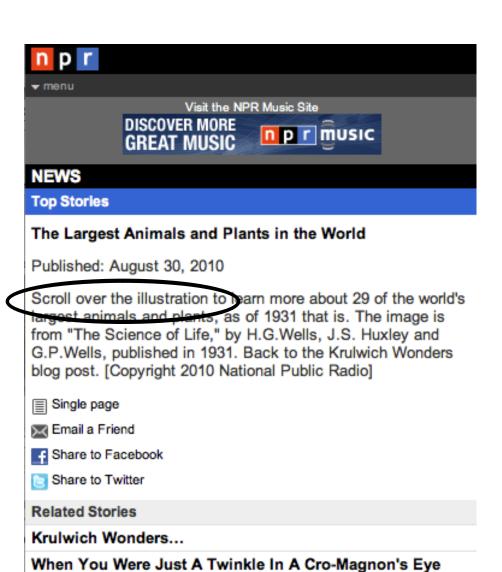


### The Largest Animals and Plants in the World

Scroll over the illustration to learn more about 29 of the world's largest animals and plants, as of 1931 that is. The image is from "The Science of Life," by H.G.Wells, J.S. Huxley and G.P.Wells, published in 1931. Back to the Krulwich Wonders blog post.

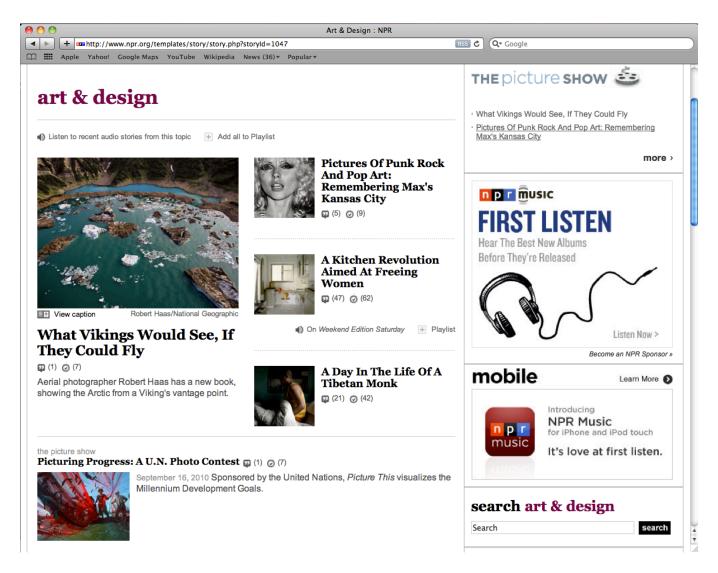


Credit: Maggie Starbard, Whitney Blair Wyckoff, Stephanie d'Otreppe



« Back to News

# A thousand words of COPE



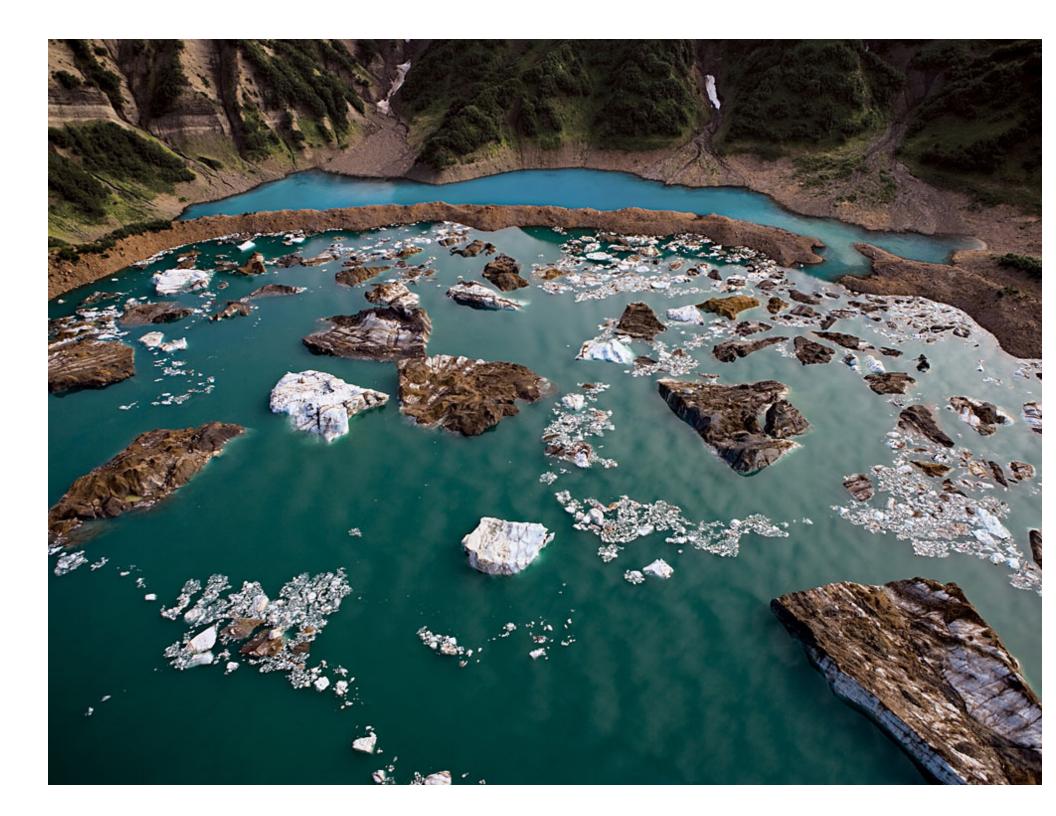


1:1 4:3 1:1

1:1

4:3

n p r



# Good Crop. Bad Crop.

Images are even more important in our newest site design. Good crops are essential to great page design.

### Original image



uncropped

### Story page/featured area image



good crop



bad crop

For images used on the story page or in featured areas, it is better to include more detail. The bad crop is too tight and doesn't give enough sense of place.

### Square promo image





good crop

bad crop

When cropping promo images, it is important to make a tight crop. At a small size, you can see how the bad crop becomes tough to understand.

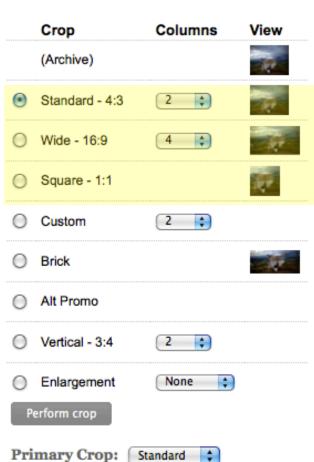
### **Image**

rotate left

rotate right

Original Dimensions: 889 x 667px Selected Area: 650 x 488px





<< Back | Cancel | Next >>

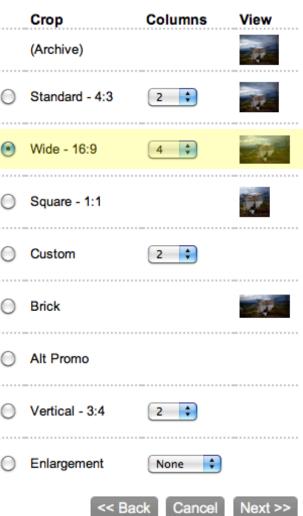
### **Image**

rotate left

rotate right

Original Dimensions: 889 x 667px Selected Area: 650 x 488px



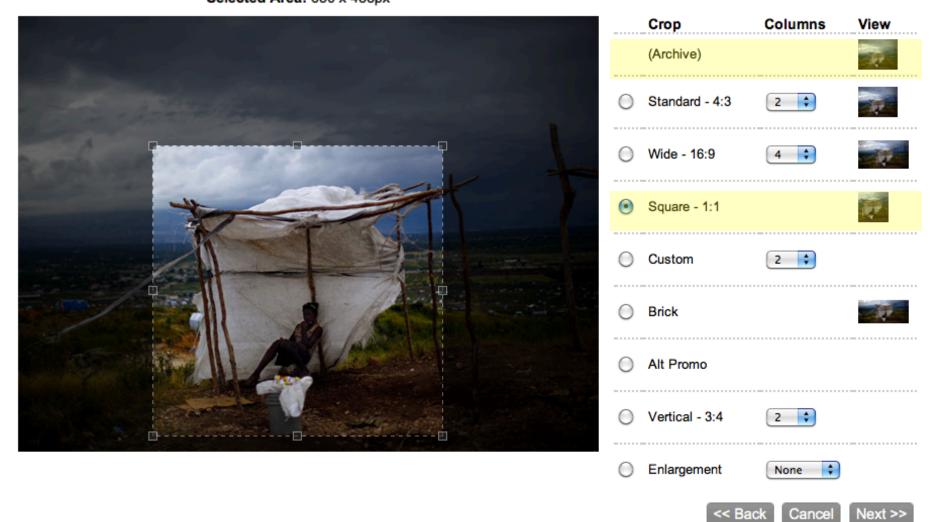


### **Image**

rotate left

rotate right

Original Dimensions: 889 x 667px Selected Area: 650 x 488px



# Image Data in the API

Crop View <image id="133849355"</pre> type="primary" width="200" Standard - 4:3 src="http://media.npr.org/img/al.jpg" hasBorder="false"> Wide - 16:9 <crop type="square"</pre> src="http://media.npr.org/img/as.jpg" Square - 1:1 height="440" width="440"/> <crop type="wide"</pre> Custom src="http://media.npr.org/img/aw.jpg" height="400" width="225"/> Brick </image> Alt Promo Vertical - 3:4



# #3 Team structure based on Tech/Content link

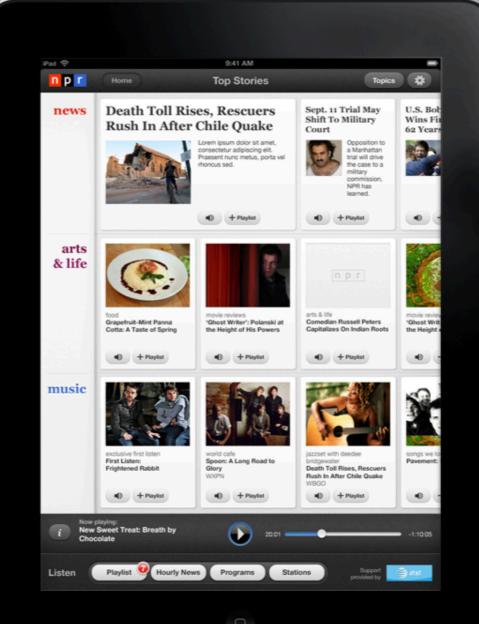


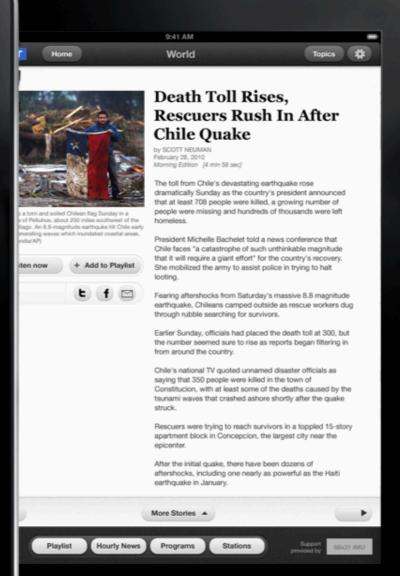
#3 Team structure should recognize Tech/Content link

# Good Tools Good People

Flexible Content





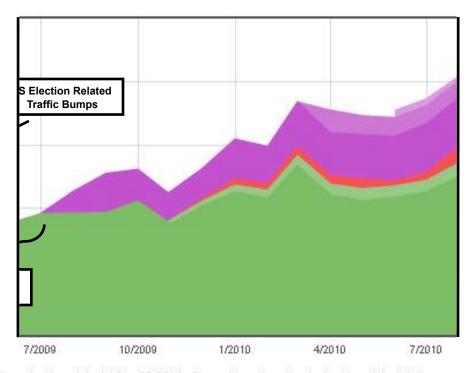


#4 .... Its an investment

"I had to actually purchase a book to learn the API and write the client." Shawn Fanning of Napster Fame on MS API



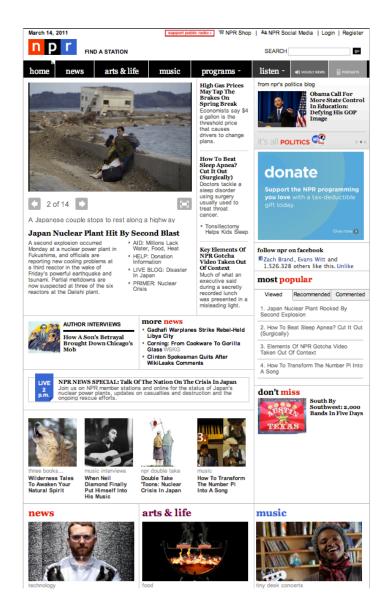
# #4 Its an investment ...



Shown in Millions, Source: Omniture, Last updated: Mar. 09 2011, Current month estimated and updated daily.

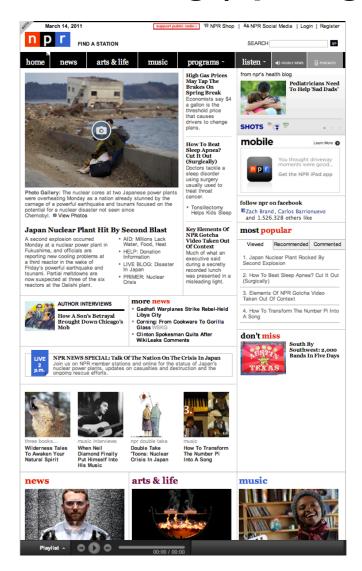


# ... Not Magic, but Does Allow Cool Things





# HTML5 Version of NPR.org (npr.org/tablet)





# **#5 It Does Drive the Business Forward**

# **Launch Expectations:**

Improvements to development efficiencies for NPR.org

Some sophisticated stations will use the API

Partner integration will be easier

The public will do amazing things with the API

# **Actual Results:**

NPR dramatically improved development efficiencies

NPR's mobile strategy took off

Some sophisticated stations have used the API

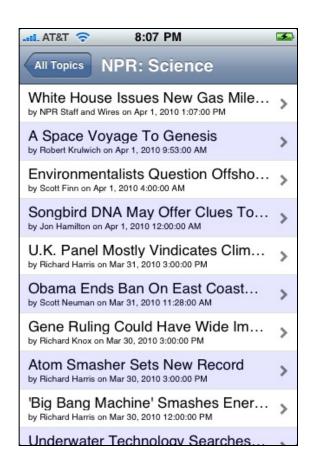
Partner integration has been easier

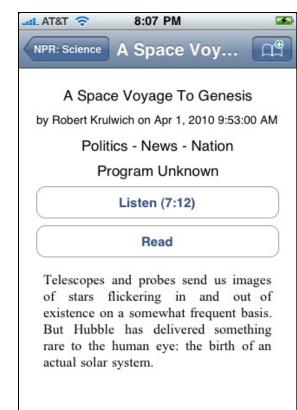
API has facilitated business development opportunities

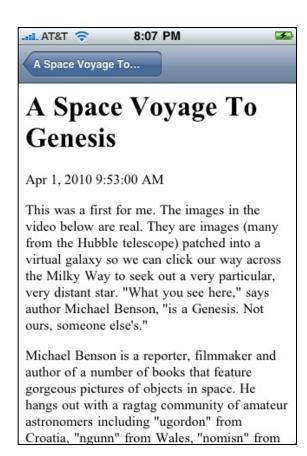
The public has done some interesting things



# NPR Addict iPhone App









# **#5 It Does Drive the Business Forward**

# **Launch Expectations:**

Improvements to development efficiencies for NPR.org

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Partner integration will be easier

The public will do amazing things with the API

# **Actual Results:**

NPR dramatically improved development efficiencies

NPR's mobile strategy took off

Some sophisticated stations have used the API

Partner integration has been easier

API has facilitated business development opportunities

The public has done some interesting things

We've been able to do amazing things with the public



## **Paid Dev**



# \$\$\$

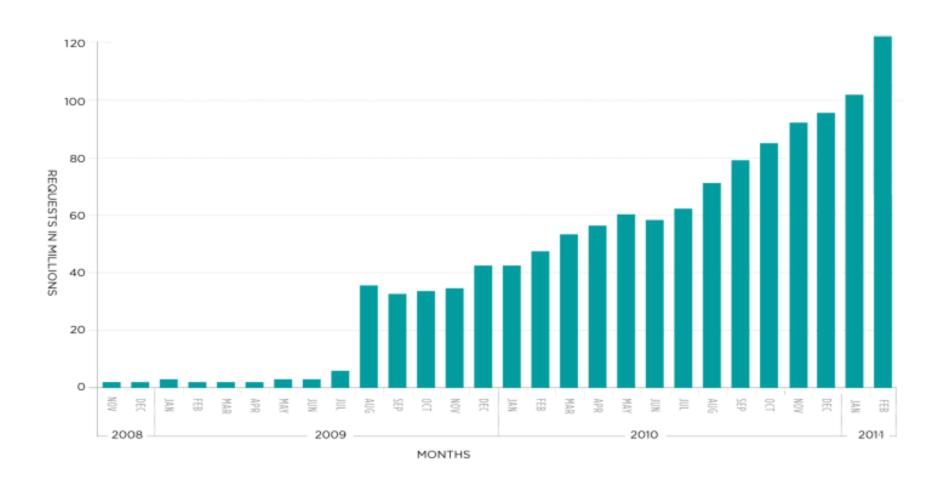
## **Public Dev**





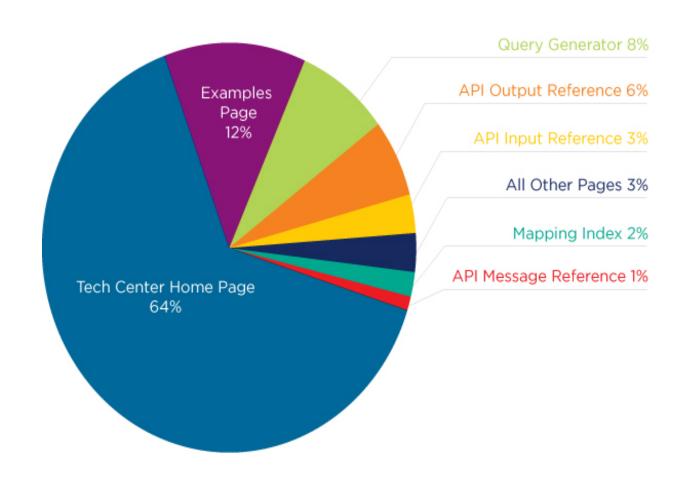


# **#5 It Does Drive the Business Forward**





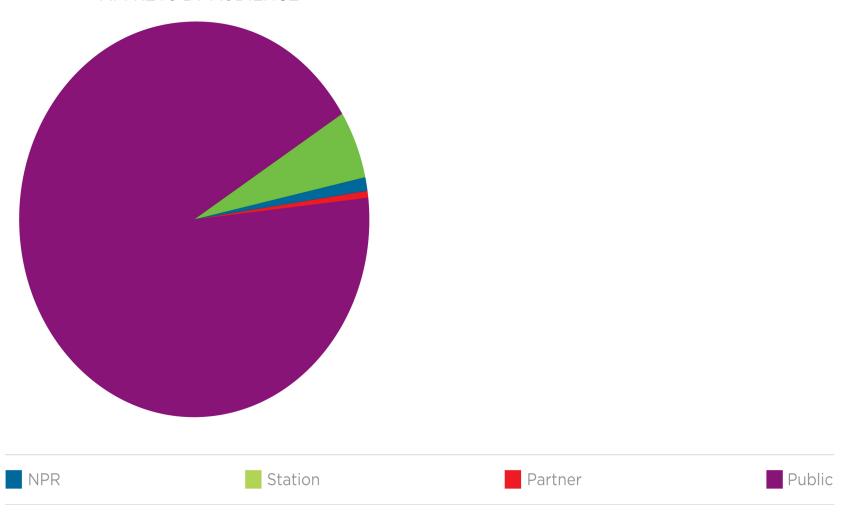
# #7 People are interested in *Examples* more than Documentation





# #8 You will eat your own dog food

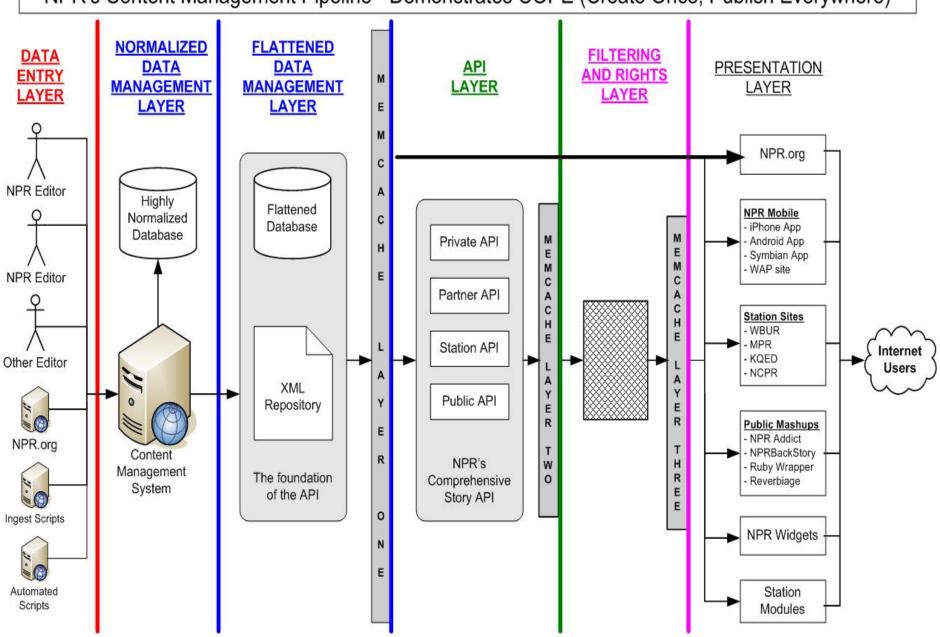


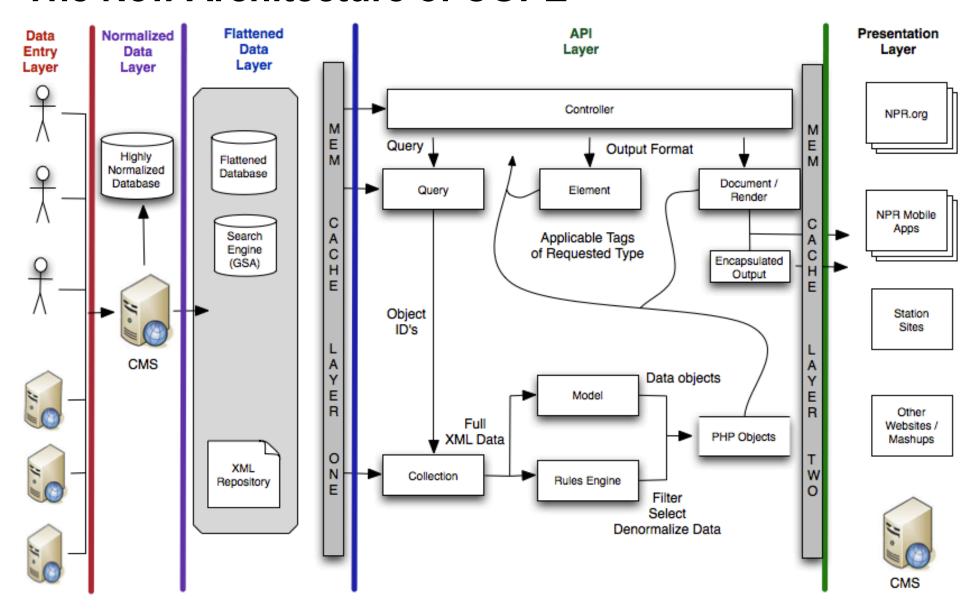


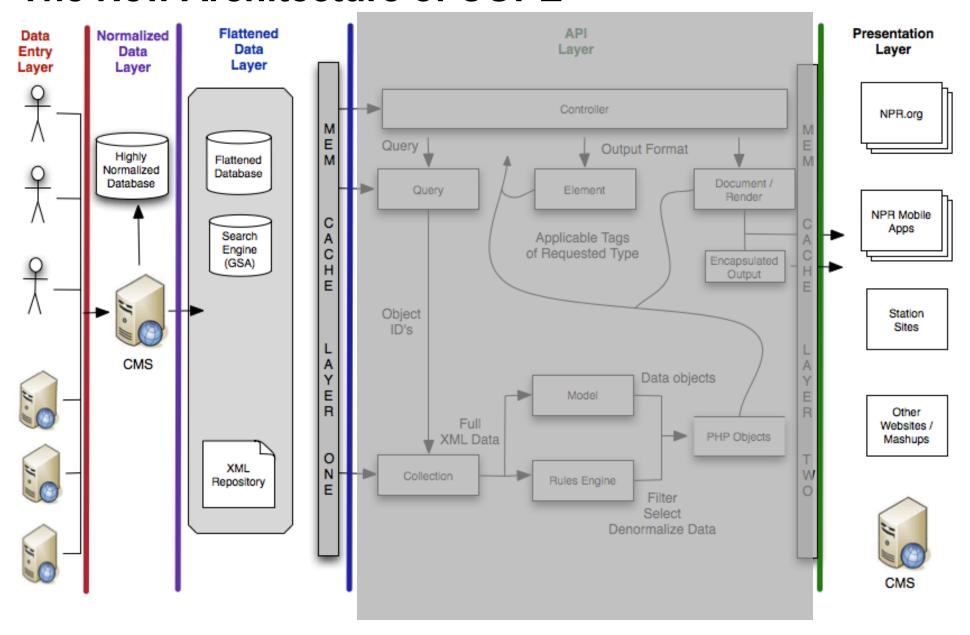


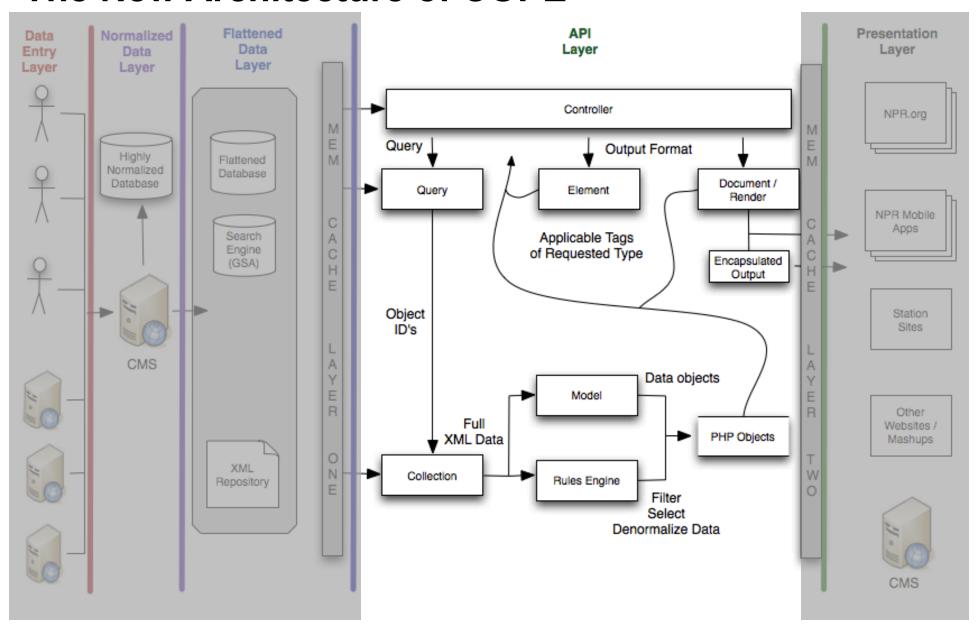
## #9 Our Architecture (2008) Struggled with Change

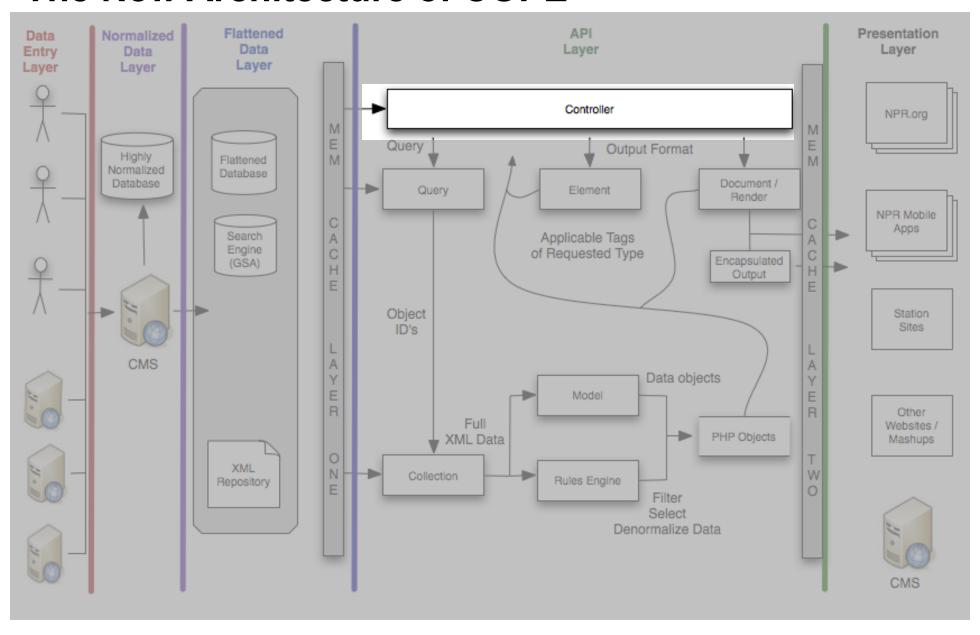
NPR's Content Management Pipeline - Demonstrates COPE (Create Once, Publish Everywhere)

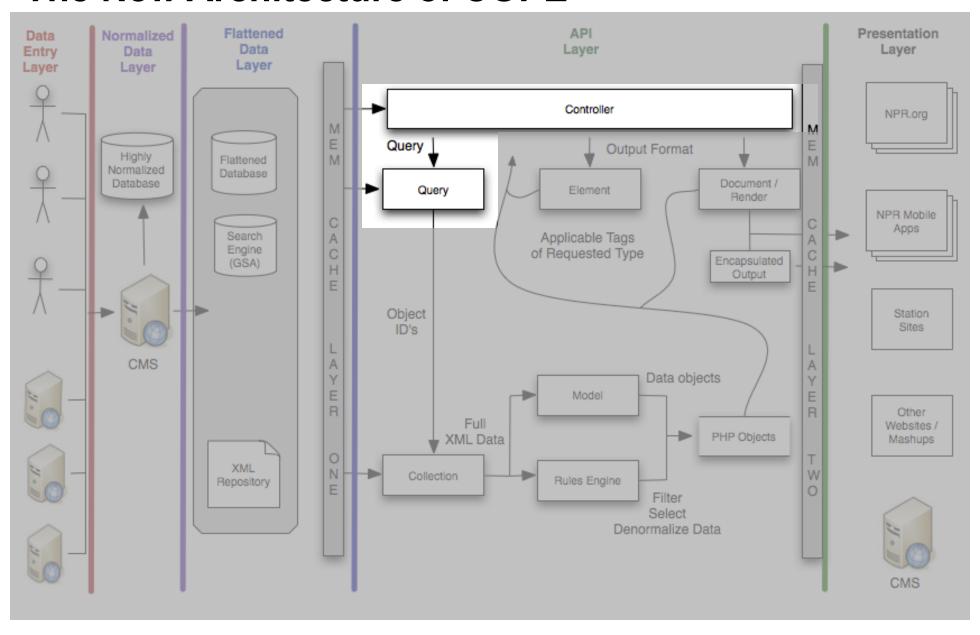


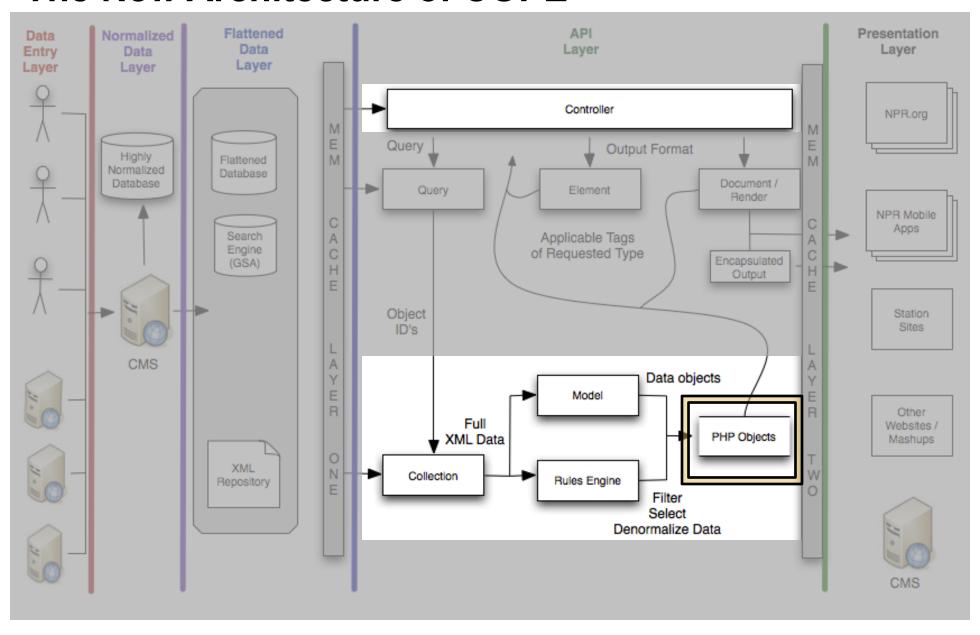


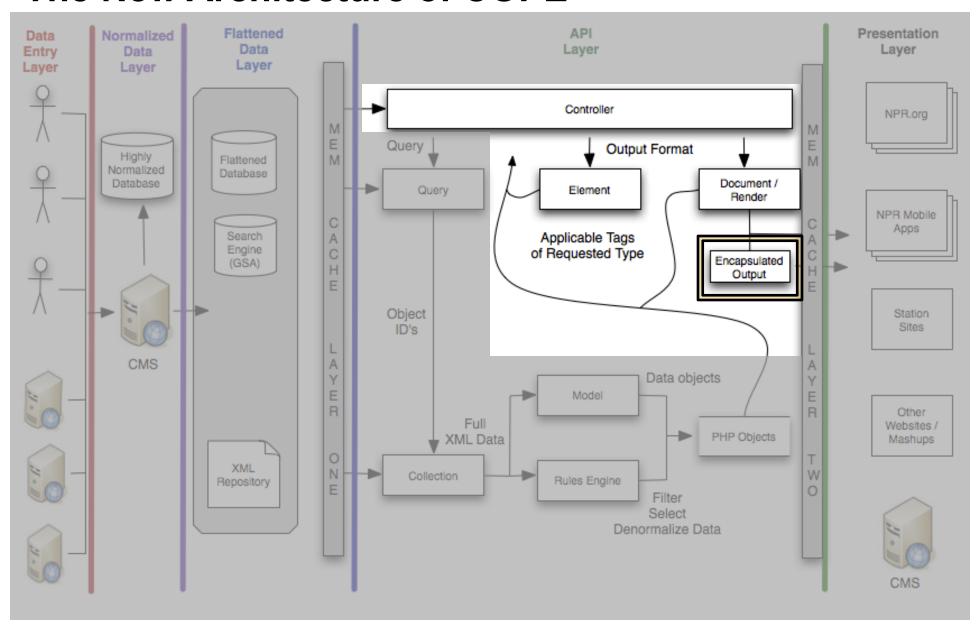












#### **Results of New Architecture**

- Response time is 22% faster (0.45 -> 0.35s)
- Eliminated many (slightly) inaccurate returns
- Faster Development on the API
- Cleaner Separation of Output formats
- No more use of Xpath Queries
- Easier Ramp up for New Developers



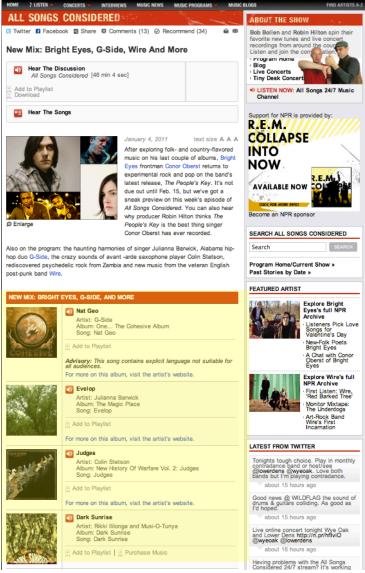
## **#10 There are Lots of Lame Excuses Why Not**

- People Can Steal Your Content
- Leadership Doesn't understand what an API is / Benefits
- Building an API Doesn't Result in New Product for Your Customers
- You'll have to Replace CMS
- You Don't Have the Time/Money/Resources
- Your Data isn't Structured for it Today
- The Benefits are Intangible
- It's Too Risky
- Requires Too Much Investment
- Too Many Other Priorities



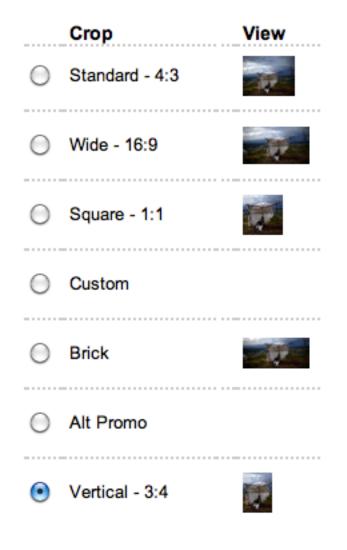
Collections





Collections

Image Crops



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</image>



Collections

Image Crops

standard: 4:3

- square: 1:1

- wide: 16:9

- brick: 300:138

- alt promo: 4:3

- vertical: 3:4

New Output Types are Easier

Plists (Binary)



- Collections
- Image Crops

- standard: 4:3

- square: 1:1

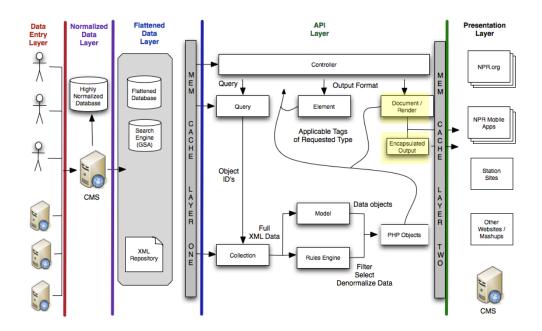
- wide: 16:9

- brick: 300:138

- alt promo: 4:3

vertical: 3:4

- New Output Types are Easier
  - Plists (Binary)



### To Recap

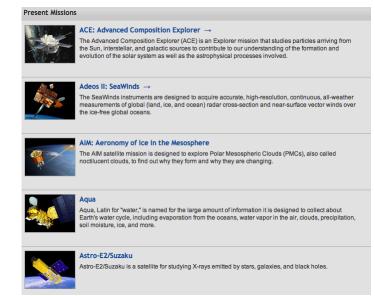
- Content & Technology Are Inextricably Linked
  - Team Structure and Process Should Recognize this
- To Be 'Findable' Your Content Should Be Flexible.
- Flexible Content (i.e. Embraces COPE):
  - Requires An Investment x2
  - Improves Content Creation Efficiency
  - Will Help Drive Growth / Relevancy
  - Revolutionizes Your Biz Dev
  - Creates Opportunities with Public
  - Accelerates Your Tech Development

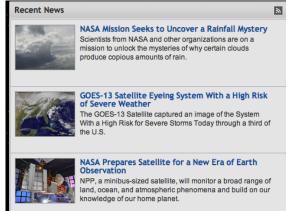


#### **Goddard**













### **Questions?**

Email: <u>zbrand@npr.org</u>

Twitter: @zbrand

• API: <u>www.npr.org/api</u>

Blog <a href="http://www.npr.org/blogs/inside">http://www.npr.org/blogs/inside</a>

